

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: _____ K _____

Date: April 27, 2007

Topic: First Review of a Request for Approval of an Alternative Accreditation Plan from the Richmond City Public Schools for Richmond Alternative School

Presenter: Mrs. Kathleen M. Smith, Director of the Office of School Improvement
Dr. Deborah Jewell-Sherman, Superintendent, Richmond City Public Schools
Dr. Yvonne Brandon, Associate Superintendent for Instruction and Accountability,
Richmond City Public Schools

Telephone Number: 804-225-2865

E-Mail Address: Kathleen.Smith@doe.virginia.gov

Origin:

_____ Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

X Board review required by

_____ State or federal law or regulation

X Board of Education regulation

_____ Other: _____

X Action requested at this meeting _____ Action requested at future meeting: _____
(date)

Previous Review/Action:

_____ No previous board review/action

X Previous review/action

date October 25, 2006

action Board requested that Richmond City Public Schools submit an alternative accreditation plan for Richmond Alternative School as a requirement for conditional accreditation

Background Information:

The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* adopted by the Board in September 2006 Section 8 VAC 20-131.315.C of the standards states:

As an alternative to the memorandum of understanding outlined in subsection B of this section, a local school board may choose to reconstitute a school rated Accreditation Denied and apply to the Board of Education for a rating of Conditionally Accredited. The application shall outline specific responses that address all areas of deficiency that resulted in the Accreditation Denied rating and may include any of the provisions of subsection B of this section.

Section 8 VAC 20-131-5 of the standards states that the definition of “reconstitution means a process that may be used to initiate a range of accountability actions to improve pupil performance, curriculum, and instruction to address deficiencies that caused a school to be rated Accreditation Denied that may include, but not be limited to, restructuring a school’s governance, instructional program, staff or student population.”

Richmond Alternative School was rated Accreditation Denied for the 2006-2007 school year. Richmond City Public Schools reconstituted Richmond Alternative School and applied to the Board to accept the terms of the reconstitution and change the rating of Accreditation Denied to Conditionally Accredited on October 25, 2006. The request for this rating was granted; however, the Board of Education requested that Richmond City Public Schools submit for approval an alternative accreditation plan for Richmond Alternative School.

The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* effective September 7, 2006, Section 8 VAC 20-131.280.C. of the standards states:

Subject to the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-330, the governing school board of special purpose schools such as those provided for in §22.1-26 of the Code, Governor’s schools, special education schools, alternative schools, or career and technical schools that serve as the student’s school of principal enrollment may seek approval of an alternative accreditation plan from the Board of Education. Special purpose schools with alternative accreditation plans shall be evaluated on standards appropriate to the programs offered in the school and approved by the Board prior to August 1 of the school year for which approval is requested. Any student graduating from a special purpose school with a Standard, Advanced Studies, or Modified Standard Diploma must meet the requirements prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50.

Section 22.1-253.13:1.D.8 of the *Standards of Quality* requires local school boards to provide educational alternatives for students whose needs are not met in programs prescribed elsewhere in these standards. Such students shall be counted in average daily membership (ADM) in accordance with the regulations of the Board of Education. Regulations governing programs such as this are found in the accrediting standards, which permit alternative accreditation plans and allow the Board to grant waivers to certain provisions of the standards.

Summary of Major Elements:

Richmond City Public Schools partners with the Community Education Partners (CEP) to provide services through the Capital City Program (CCP) at Richmond Alternative School. The purpose of the partnership is to support low-performing and disruptive students so that they can return to their home schools prepared to be successful. This program focuses on the most difficult students with learning and behavioral issues as a result of factors beyond the control of public education.

CCP encompasses students in grades three through twelve who are consistently experiencing severe behavioral problems and for whom no other appropriate services have been successful. Students are placed at CCP for a period of 180 days through referral from their current school principal or the hearing officer. Students have failed to respond positively to the traditional schools’ intervention strategies and may face the possibilities of being retained or dropping out of school.

Prior to the assignment to CCP, the parent(s), student, and the principal discuss the components of the program. Parent signatures are required before final referral. Parent and student meetings are also held upon enrollment with the "Welcome Center Coordinator." After final placement decisions have been made, parents and students must participate in an orientation session at the alternative school. Parents are provided an overview of the program and encouraged to participate in the school's parental programs. Home/school communication plans are also reviewed. Additionally, parents participate in the transition program in preparation for the child to return to his home school environment.

Richmond Alternative School offers a challenging curriculum aligned with state and local standards in a safe, supportive, smaller learning community to provide quality-learning opportunities affording students skills and behaviors necessary to become lifelong learners. Students are offered appropriate grade-level courses in English/Reading, science, mathematics, and social science. The students also receive instruction in workplace readiness, basic skill enhancement and personal social development.

Intensive in-home counseling services are provided by Associated Educational Services (AES), a local provider, to meet the social needs of students. Medical data concerning unmet needs or those that require maintenance are coordinated between the nurses of Capitol City Program (CCP) and the district school. Every effort is made to continue services so that students will continue to be successful. Two student service specialists coordinate services from Department of Juvenile Justice, Richmond City Social Services, Richmond Behavior Health Authority, Richmond Division of Public Health, Family Focus, Associated Educational Services, and other service providers.

Once students return to their home school, a student service specialist visits the students weekly and monitors their progress. During these visits, the information on the student's attendance, behavior, grades, and tests score results are reviewed. Specific plans for improvement are developed and monitored.

Teachers assigned to CCP will be highly qualified by July 1, 2007.

Much of the time spent by students in the CCP program focuses on teaching students life skills needed for success. Due to the time required for this focus, foreign language, physical education and fine arts are not offered. For this reason, Richmond City Public Schools is requesting a waiver from 8 VAC 20-131-100 A. of the Standards of Accreditation that require foreign language, physical education and fine arts as stated below:

8 VAC 20-131-100. Instructional program in secondary schools.

- A. The secondary school shall provide each student a program of instruction in the academic areas of English, mathematics, science, and history/social science that enables each student to meet the graduation requirements described in 8 VAC 20-131-50 and shall offer opportunities for students to pursue a program of studies in foreign languages, fine arts, and career and technical areas including:
 - 1. Career and technical education choices that prepare the student as a career and technical education program completer in one of three or more occupational areas and that prepare the student for technical or preprofessional postsecondary programs;

2. Coursework and experiences that prepare the student for college-level studies including access to at least three Advanced Placement (AP) courses, college-level courses for degree credit, International Baccalaureate (IB) courses, Cambridge courses, or any combination thereof;
3. Preparation for college admissions tests; and
4. Opportunities to study and explore the fine arts and foreign languages.

B. Minimum course offerings for each secondary school shall provide opportunities for students to meet the graduation requirements stated in 8 VAC 20-131-50 and must include:

English	4
Mathematics	4
Science (Laboratory)	4
History and Social Sciences	4
Foreign Language	3
Electives	4
Career and Technical Education	11
Fine Arts	2
Health and Physical Education	2
Total Units	38

Beginning with the 2007 school year, Richmond City Public Schools proposes an alternative accreditation index model that will hold Richmond Alternative School accountable for increasing the achievement levels of students enrolled for a full academic year (at least 2 semesters) in reading and mathematics and use science and history and social science and other indicators of school and student performance that are aligned with the mission and goals of the school as value-added components. The goals and performance objectives for the proposed alternative accreditation plan are included in Attachment A.

The alternative accreditation index model will measure student achievement based on students' progress in moving from basic to proficient to advanced levels of performance on Standards of Learning assessments. The index will have a primary focus on reading and mathematics achievement. The index is based on a set of core achievement objectives and measures (SOL test scores and other indicators) as well as "reach" or excellence goals for the student population. An alternative accreditation index score (0 to 100 points) will be calculated primarily based on the total number of students performing at each proficiency level in reading and mathematics.

SOL index points are assigned for student performance on the SOL tests by multiplying the number of student scores at each level by the points awarded, adding the total points earned, and dividing by the total number of student scores. Additional index points may be earned for meeting performance measures in the core "other academic" and optional "reach" objectives categories. The Alternative Accreditation index score for each content area (English and mathematics) is calculated by combining the SOL index score and the additional index points. An Alternative Accreditation index score of at least 70 points must be earned in both English and mathematics to achieve fully accredited status. If the

school fails to achieve fully accredited status, the rating will be in accordance with provisions of the Standards of Accreditation.

Superintendent's Recommendation: The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education accept for first review the alternative accreditation plan for Richmond Alternative School.

Impact on Resources: There is no impact on the resources of the Department of Education.

Timetable for Further Review/Action: The Board will consider for final review the alternative accreditation plan for Richmond Alternative School on May 30, 2007.

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION PLAN

Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia, (8 VAC 20-131-10 et. seq.) set the minimum standards public schools must meet to be accredited by the Board of Education. Accreditation of public schools is required by the Standards of Quality (22.1-253.13:1 et. seq.). The annual accrediting cycle for public schools is July 1 through June 30. This cover sheet, with the supporting documentation, must be submitted to the Department of Education for review and recommendation to the Board at least 90 days prior to August 1 of the school year in which the plan is to be implemented.

8 VAC 20-131-280 of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* states (in part): *Special purpose schools such as regional, special education, alternative, or career and technical schools that serve as the student's school of principal enrollment shall be evaluated on standards appropriate to the programs offered in the school and approved by the Board prior to August 1 of the school year for which approval is requested. Any student graduating from a special purpose school with a Standard, Advanced Studies, or Modified Standard Diploma must meet the requirements prescribed in 8 VAC 20-131-50.*

The Board of Education, in its *Guidelines Governing the Implementation of Certain Provisions of the Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, states:

Schools described in this section are those that serve as a student's school of principal enrollment and where students are reported in fall membership for the school. Fall membership determines whether or not these schools are subject to the provisions of the accrediting standards; therefore, schools reporting fall membership are subject to the provisions of the standards. These schools may or may not administer Standards of Learning (SOL) tests.

In accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-330 of the standards, local school boards may seek waivers of provisions of the standards to address the unique needs of these special purpose schools. Such requests may include an alternative accreditation plan. Applications must be submitted to the Board for consideration at least ninety days prior to August 1 of the school year. Requests for consideration must be accompanied by information that documents the need for approval of the request.

We, the undersigned, submit this request for review and approval by the Board of Education and understand that we are expected to appear before the Board to discuss the program and respond to questions raised.

Date Approved
by the Local School Board

Signature
Chairman of the School Board

Submission Date

Signature
Division Superintendent

**A Request for Conditional Accreditation
The Richmond Alternative School
Richmond City Public Schools**

An Alternative Accreditation Plan

Purpose: To ensure that no child is left behind, the Capital City Program (CCP) works in partnership with the Richmond Public Schools and the community to get low performing and disruptive students back on track in their learning and behavior, enabling them to successfully return to their home schools academically and socially prepared. This partnership focuses on the most difficult students with learning and behavioral issues as a result of a variety of factors beyond the control of public education.

Vision/Mission: The Capital City Program provides quality alternative education services to the students of Richmond's middle and high schools by making a positive difference in the lives of the students served and by achieving measurable results in academic and behavioral skills. A rigorous instructional program and a personal/social development program are provided for each child in a safe and secure learning environment. CCP envisions taking students who otherwise would not succeed in public education and turnaround to assist them in becoming successful life long learners.

Target Population: CCP encompasses students in grades three through twelve who are consistently experiencing severe behavioral problems and for whom no other appropriate services have been successful. Students are placed at CCP for a period of 180 days through a referral from their current school principal or the hearing officer. Students assigned to our alternative program have failed to respond positively to the traditional schools' intervention strategies and may face the possibilities of being retained and/or of dropping out of school. Prior to the assignment to CCP, the parent(s), student, and the principal discuss the components of the program. Parent signatures are required before final referral. Parent and student meetings are also held upon enrollment with the Welcome Center Coordinator. After final placement decisions have been made, parents and students must participate in an orientation session at the alternative school. Parents are provided an overview of the program and encouraged to participate in the school's parental programs. Home/school communication plans are also reviewed. Additionally, parents participate in the transition program in preparation for the child to return to his home school environment.

Student Selection Criteria:

CCP has a specialized design that offers instructional strategies and a unique organizational structure to meet the needs of challenged students who have been unsuccessful in the traditional comprehensive school setting. Student selection evidence in the following areas is considered for placement:

- Severe behavioral needs that interfere with learning
- Severe social/emotional needs that are barriers to the student's success and/or the learning of others
- Attendance/truancy issues
- A referral from the hearing officer for violation of the RPS *Students' Code of Conduct*

Program of Instruction:

Richmond Alternative School offers a challenging curriculum aligned with state and local standards in safe, supportive, small learning communities to provide quality-learning opportunities affording students skills and behaviors necessary to become lifelong learners. Students are offered appropriate grade-level courses in English/Reading, science, mathematics, and social science. The students also receive instruction in workplace readiness, basic skill enhancement and personal social development.

- Upon enrollment, each student participates in a four-day orientation program that is designed to review the child's record of past performance and to develop a plan for his/her success at CCP. Plans for academic, attendance/truancy, and behavior improvements are developed with students to address their specific needs. These plans will guide students during the 180-day stay at CCP so that they may successfully transition to the next placement at a comprehensive middle or high school.
- The Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) are taught through grade level courses in the four academic areas: reading, math, science and social studies at the middle school level and the full range of appropriate courses for high school students. Additionally, electives are required in personal/social development, reading and math intensive enrichment offered through a PLATO lab setting, and Employment Seminar (career education) which is offered through the PLATO lab at the high school level.
- Reading and math assessments are completed upon entering the program to assist in the development of the students' plan for academic success. Growth is monitored monthly or more frequently to ensure gains for each student. It is expected that each student will show at least a 1.5 years of growth in both areas by the 120th day of enrollment. As student progress is monitored, appropriate intervention and remediation strategies are deployed as deemed necessary from data analyses.
- Students will be taught by highly qualified teachers as required under federal guidelines. One hundred percent compliance is guaranteed by July 1, 2007.
- Art and conversational Spanish are offered to each student on a scheduled basis.
- Instruction is provided in four small learning communities staffed by a learning community instructional leader and learning community assistant in leadership/supervisory roles: High school boys, high school girls, middle school boys and middle school girls. Four 90-minute blocks comprise the high school day and five 75 minute blocks make up the high school day. Reading and math computer labs are included in all communities.
- Forty hours of school level professional development are required for all instructional staff during the week preceding the beginning of each school year. Thereafter, content meetings held weekly, as well as monthly district instructional meetings for representative lead teachers, provide support for continuous improvement as a high quality instructional program.
- Teachers use all of the instructional resources available from the Richmond Public Schools. These resources were developed based upon the Standards of Learning. Instructional staff

members have been trained in using these resources as well as how to use data to make instructional decisions.

Student Assessment and Evaluation:

- Students at all grade levels will participate in SOL testing in all four content areas. Each year progress will be monitored that will show steady gains toward meeting state and district goals.
- Benchmark nine-week assessment data will be used to monitor student progress toward mastery of the SOL. Data will be analyzed so that appropriate interventions and program improvement will be implemented.
- PLATO diagnostic assessments will be administered to each student upon enrollment and regularly thereafter to monitor student growth in reading and math.
- Progress reports are sent to parents on a weekly basis.
- Weekly teacher-made assessments monitor students' mastery of objectives taught during the week based upon the teaching of an aligned curriculum. Reteaching activities are planned.
- Richmond Public Schools report cards are given to students according to the district's guidelines and calendar.

Accreditation and Adequate Yearly Progress:

The alternative accreditation index model will hold the alternative school accountable for increasing the achievement levels of students enrolled for a full academic year (at least 2 semesters) in reading and mathematics and use science and history and social science and other indicators of school and student performance that are aligned with the mission and goals of the school as value-added components.

Student achievement is a fundamental component in determining the accreditation status of Virginia's public schools. The alternative accreditation index model will measure student achievement based on students' progress in moving from basic to proficient to advanced levels of performance on Standards of Learning assessments. The index will have a primary focus on reading and mathematics achievement. The index is based on a set of core achievement objectives and measures (SOL test scores and other indicators) as well as "reach" or excellence goals for the student population.

An alternative accreditation index score (0 to 100 points) will be calculated primarily based on the total number of students performing at each proficiency level in reading and mathematics.

SOL Index Points are assigned for student performance on the SOL tests by multiplying the number of student scores at each level by the points awarded, adding the total points earned, and dividing by the total number of student scores. Additional Index Points may be earned for meeting performance measures in the core "other academic" and optional "reach" objectives categories.

The Alternative Accreditation Index Score for each content area (English and Mathematics) is calculated by combining the SOL Index Score and the Additional Index Points.

An Alternative Accreditation Index Score of at least 70 points must be earned in both English and mathematics to achieve fully accredited status. If the school fails to achieve fully accredited status, the rating will be in accordance with provisions of the Standards of Accreditation.

Goals and Performance Objectives for Alternative Accreditation Plan

Goal: *All students will improve their academic performance so that they may successfully transition back to their home school environment through intensive focus on the core areas of English and mathematics and through achieving certain behavioral and conduct modifications that are indicative of being a responsible and productive student in an academic environment.*

<i>Performance Objective</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>
<i>Core Achievement Objectives:</i>	
<i>1. Increase the percentage of students in grades 3-5 reading on grade level</i>	<i>Weighted index of SOL test scores of students enrolled for a full academic year (2 semesters) achieving at the basic, proficient, and advanced levels on the reading SOL tests in grades 3-5</i>
<i>2. Increase the percentage of students in grades 6-12 passing SOL English reading and writing tests</i>	<i>Weighted index of students enrolled for a full academic year (at least 2 semesters) achieving at the basic, proficient, and advanced levels on the SOL English reading and writing tests in grades 6-8 and high school</i>
<i>3. Increase the percentage of students in grades 3-8 passing SOL mathematics tests</i>	<i>Weighted index of students enrolled for a full academic year (at least 2 semesters) achieving at the basic, proficient, and advanced levels on the SOL mathematics tests in grades 3-8</i>
<i>4. Increase the percentage of students in grades 9-12 passing Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II SOL exams</i>	<i>Weighted index of students enrolled for a full academic year (at least 2 semesters) achieving at the proficient and advanced levels on the SOL end-of-course exams in Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II</i>
<i>Core “Other Academic” Indicators</i>	
<i>5. Increase the percentage of students in grades 3-8 and high school passing science and history and social science SOL tests</i>	<i>Weighted index of students enrolled for a full academic year (at least 2 semesters) achieving at the proficient and advanced levels on the SOL assessments in science and history and social science</i>

<i>Performance Objective</i>	<i>Performance Measure</i>
<i>6. Increase the percentage of high school graduates and completers</i>	<i>Percentage of students enrolled for at least 2 consecutive semesters who complete high school with a diploma or GED certificate</i>
<i>Core “Other Indicator” Objectives:</i>	
<i>Decrease number of students identified as truants by 10%</i>	<i>Truancy rates for students in program</i>
<i>Average daily attendance meets or exceeds 80 percent</i>	<i>Average Daily Attendance rates for students</i>
<i>Increase number of students successfully transitioned into regular school setting</i>	<i>Successful transition shall be measured by a student completing the program who passes three or more subjects in the transition school during the first semester at the transition school</i>
<i>Decrease number of serious incidents while at CCP.</i>	<i>Serious incident data for CCP students</i>
<i>Optional “Reach” Objectives:</i>	
<i>Increase the percentage or number of middle school students taking Algebra I</i>	<i>Percentage or number of students in grades 6-8 taking Algebra I increases annually</i>
<i>Increase the number of high school students earning a career and technical credential</i>	<i>Number of high school students earning a career and technical industry certification or a national occupational assessment credential increases annually</i>
<i>Increase the percentage or number of high school students taking dual-enrollment, Advanced Placement, or other college-level courses</i>	<i>Percentage or number of high school students taking at least one dual-enrollment, Advanced Placement, or other college-level courses</i>

Alternative Accreditation Index Point System:

<i>SOL Scaled Score</i>	<i>SOL Proficiency Level</i>	<i>Points Awarded Each SOL Score</i>
500-600	Advanced	100
400-499	Proficient	90
Up to 399 (varies by test)	Basic (Reading and Math 3-8)	70
Below 400 (except Basic)	Fail	0
<i>Core Other Academic Objectives (points maximum)</i>		
<i>Weighted index of students enrolled for a full academic year (at least 2 semesters) achieving at the proficient and advanced levels on the SOL assessments in science and history and social science</i>	Index scores and Points Earned: 70 and above.....3points 60 – 69.....1 point	
<i>Increased percentage of students enrolled for at least 2 consecutive semesters who complete high school with a diploma or GED certificate</i>	2 points	
<i>Optional Reach Objectives (3 points maximum)</i>		
<i>Increased percentage or number of students in grades 6-8 taking Algebra I</i>	1 point	
<i>Increased number of high school students earning a career and technical industry certification or a national occupational assessment credential</i>	1 point	
<i>Increased percentage or number of high school students taking at least one dual-enrollment, Advanced Placement, or other college-level courses</i>	1 point	
<i>Core Other Indicator Objectives (8 points maximum)</i>		
<i>Decrease number of students identified as truants by 10%</i>	2 points	
<i>Average daily attendance meets or exceeds 80 percent</i>	2 points	
<i>Increased number of students successfully transitioned into regular school setting</i>	2 points	
<i>Decrease number the number of serious incidents while at CCP.</i>	2 points	

Alternative Accreditation Index Score Calculations Illustrated:

Example: English/Reading Index Score

<i>No. of Student Scores</i>	<i>SOL Proficiency Level</i>	<i>Points Awarded Each SOL Score</i>	<i>Points Awarded</i>
15	Advanced	100	1,500
45	Proficient	90	4,050
25	Basic	70	1,750
15	Fail	0	0
(a) SOL Score Points Awarded			7,300
(b) Total No. of Student Scores			100
(c) SOL Index Points = Total Score Points (a) divided by Total No. Scores (b)			73
(d) Additional Index Points (up to 15 points maximum from other objective measures) [Example: 5 pts. earned]			5
(e) Alternative Accreditation Index Score = SOL Index Score (c) + Additional Index Points (d)			78
Met content area alternative accreditation requirements: YES/NO Yes = Index Score of 70 or above			Yes

Example: Mathematics Index Score

<i>No. of Student Scores</i>	<i>Proficiency Level</i>	<i>Points Awarded Each SOL Score</i>	<i>Points Awarded</i>
5	Advanced	100	500
60	Proficient	90	5,400
25	Basic	70	1,750
10	Fail	0	0
(a) SOL Score Points Awarded			7,650
(b) Total No. of Student Scores			100
(c) SOL Index Points = Total Score Points (a) divided by Total No. Scores (b)			76.5
(d) Additional Index Points (up to 15 points maximum from other objective measures) [Example: 5 pts. earned]			5
(e) Alternative Accreditation Index Score = SOL Index Score (c) + Additional Index Points (d)			81.5
Met content area alternative accreditation requirements: YES/NO Yes = Index Score of 70 or above			Yes

Example: Determination of School Alternative Accreditation Rating

Content Area	Index Score	Met Alternative Accreditation Requirement
English	78	Yes
Mathematics	81.5	Yes
School Accreditation Rating: Fully Accredited Accredited with Warning Denied Accreditation		Fully Accredited

No Child Left Behind:

The Capital City Program is in compliance with all testing requirements under NCLB. Progress will be continuously assessed toward meeting all required goals. CCP students will be taught by highly qualified teachers who are licensed and endorsed in their content areas.

Monitoring Student Progress for Transition:

- Upon enrollment at CCP in the four-day orientation program, students will develop individualized success plans for transition.
- Plans will be reviewed by Student Service Specialists, the Educational Specialist (guidance counselor) and the Learning Community Leader who is responsible for filing the plans.
- Quarterly conferences conducted by Learning Community Leaders will be held with each student to review progress toward established goals and transition.
- Based upon progress on the transition criteria, the transition curriculum is put in place during the last nine weeks of the student's stay at CCP to prepare him/her for return to his zoned school.
- For a period of 180 days after transitioning, a structured support system is provided by CCP to ensure each student's success

The Student Transition Process:

- During the first and second semesters, the principal and learning community leader identify students who are within nine weeks of meeting the attendance goal of 180 days.
- The learning community leader reviews the student's record pertaining to be here, behave, and be learning to determine which students have met these indicators in a satisfactory manner. A list is prepared. Recommendations of learning community leaders and teachers are requested and considered.

- The assistant principal of curriculum reviews the list and prepares the Community Education Partners curriculum to begin to prepare students for reentry to their schools.
- The educational specialist makes contact with the designated counselor of each school preparing the students to return by developing schedules and a plan to return the students' records, making contact with parents, and setting up visitations by counselors to visit CCP to meet with students.
- Letters are officially written to parents and students by the principal congratulating students on their success and informing them of how CCP will support them during the 180 days after their return. These supports include a hotline number, an assigned Student Service Specialist who will visit them weekly, and a review of grades, attendance, and behavior records with letters of progress to be sent to them each quarter.

Wraparound Services to Address Social/Emotional Needs:

Intensive in-home counseling services are provided by Associated Educational Services (AES), a local provider, to meet the social needs of students. Medical data concerning unmet needs or those that require maintenance are coordinated between the nurses of Capitol City Program (CCP) and the district school. Every effort is made to continue services so that students will continue to be successful. Two student service specialists coordinate services from Department of Juvenile Justice, Richmond City Social Services, Richmond Behavior Health Authority, Richmond Division of Public Health, Family Focus, Associated Educational Services, and other service providers.

Once students return to their home school, a student service specialist who visits the students weekly follows them. During these visits, the information on the student's attendance, behavior, grades, and tests score results are reviewed. Specific plans for improvement are developed and monitored.

A hotline number is given so that students may call to request assistance whenever assistance is needed. Referring principals and counselors are also encouraged to call when for CCP's help.

Learning community leaders will send letters of congratulations at the end of each marking period to former students who make grades of C or better. Students of Ds and Fs will also be sent a note encouraging them to keep trying and offering assistance through the hotline. Letters from principals to transitioned students are mailed at the end of each year wishing them well on their future studies and job selections.

Waiver Requested:

Much of the time spent by students in the CCP program focuses on teaching students life skills needed for success. Due to the time required for this focus, foreign language, physical education and fine arts are not offered. For this reason, the Capital City Program is requesting waivers from 8 VAC 20-131-100 A. and 8 VAC 20-131 B. of the Standards of Accreditation that require foreign language, physical education and fine arts

**Virginia Department of Education
Evaluation Criteria
Richmond Alternative School, Richmond City Public Schools
Alternative Accreditation Plans for Special Purpose Schools**

Criteria	Yes	No	Limited
School characteristics and instructional program:			
1. The mission, purpose, and target population of the school justify its categorization as a “special purpose” school and, therefore, eligible to request an alternative accreditation plan.	√		
2. The characteristics and special needs of the student population are clearly defined, and the criteria for student placement require parental consultation and agreement.	√		
3. The program of instruction provides all students with opportunities to study a comprehensive curriculum that is customized to support the mission of the school. <i>The plan requests a waiver of 8 VAC 20-131-100 A-B.</i>			√
4. The school provides transition planning to help students be successful when they return to a regular school setting.	√		
5. Strategies used to evaluate student progress are aligned to the mission/purpose of the school and include academic achievement measures.	√		
6. Convincing evidence has been provided that students enrolled in the school have not been successful in other schools subject to all the accrediting standards.	√		
7. Students will be taught with highly qualified teachers who meet the Board of Education’s licensure requirements for instructional personnel. <i>The plan states that all teachers will be highly qualified by July 2007.</i>			√

Alternative Accreditation Accountability Criteria:			
1. Rationale and documentation provide convincing evidence that the “special purpose” nature of the school precludes its being able to reach and maintain full accreditation status as defined in the <i>Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia</i> (SOA).	√		
2. Alternative accreditation criteria described in the plan include academic achievement measures that are objective, measurable, and directly related to the mission and purpose of the school.	√		
3. The plan includes use of statewide assessment student achievement results of English and mathematics.	√		
4. The plan meets the testing requirements of the SOA.	√		
5. The plan meets the testing requirements of NCLB and describes how the school plans to meet “adequate yearly progress” requirements of the federal law.	√		
6. The plan provides convincing evidence that all pre-accreditation eligibility criteria are met for standards in which waivers have not been requested.	√		
7. Waivers have been requested for accrediting standards that are not being met, and the rationale for the waivers are clear and appropriate for the mission/purpose of the school.	√		